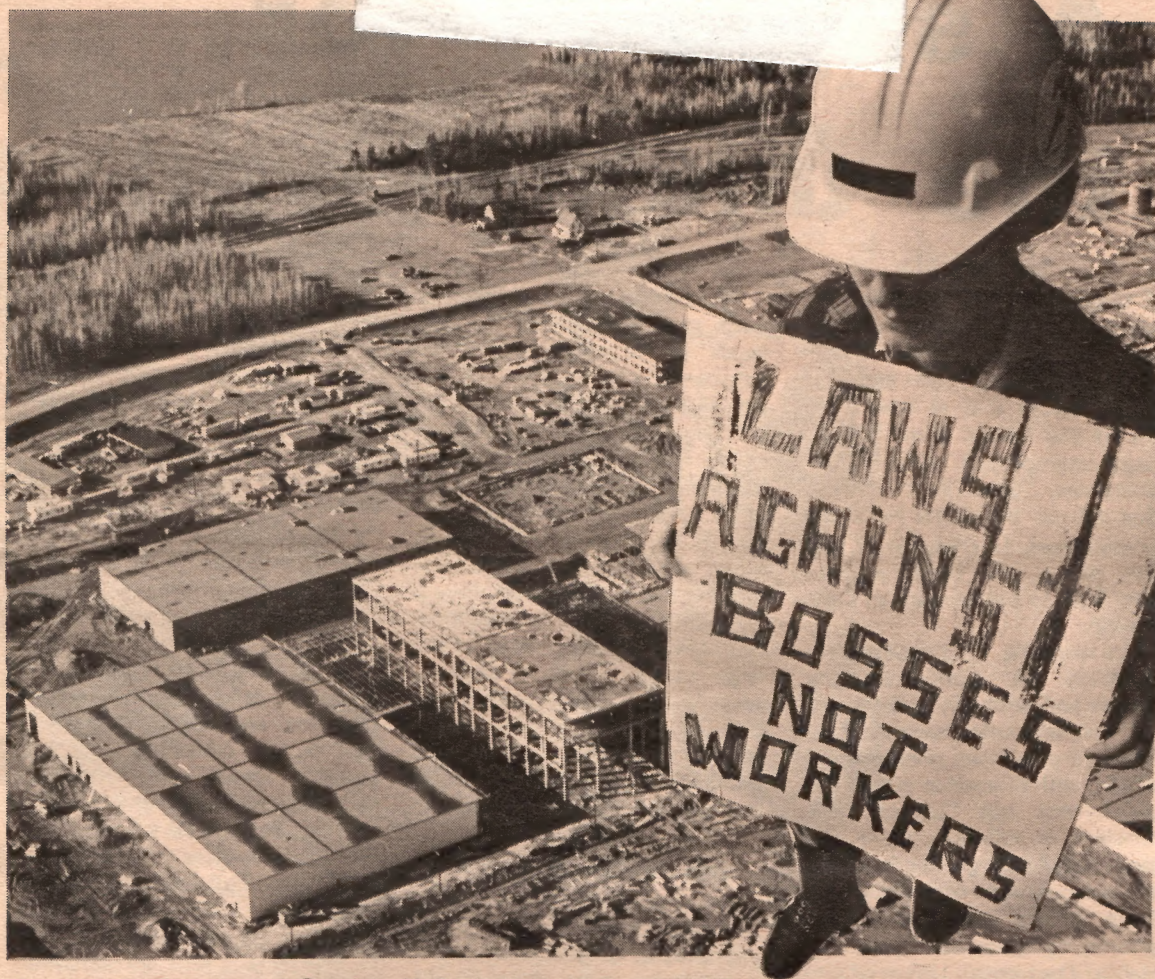


Prairie Fire
Northern Crown Building
Regina, Sask.



The Michelin Tire plant at Granton, N. S.

Gerry wields club

The Regan government is gearing up its repressive machine for a further assault on the hard-won rights of workers. On Tuesday or Wednesday the legislature is expected to pass BILL 1, "the big club", in an effort to stabilize constructions and ensure that no one monkey's with the profits of international capitalists.

Bill 1 is a vicious attack on working people. It virtually outlaws both "legal strikes" and picketing on construction sites, imposes compulsory arbitration in settling disputes and sets fines of \$1,000 per man per day and \$10,000 per union per day for those who dare to disobey the orders of government officials and arbitrators.

To date, most labour leaders have asked for small concessions. This is not enough. This oppressive bill must be thrown out completely and a decisive rank and file campaign of resistance planned and put into practice if the bill passes and is used against fellow workers.

Turn to pages 4 and 5 for labour versus the law.

East Coast Worker 1

Containers bring chaos Ship owners kill jobs

by Alan Story

In 1970 big-time New York engineer John Kneiling announced his fancy plans for our port of Halifax. Within 10 years, he said, we could create "a warehousing, assembly, bulk-breaking and repackaging industry centred on the port employing 40,000 people."

So far, Kneiling, the man Joe Howard of Halterm, Halifax port officials and government planners label "the expert" on containerization, has not been very accurate in his employment predictions. But, then, perhaps he was talking about unemployment. More than 1000 men have already lost their jobs on the Halifax waterfront, many as a result of containerization, and there haven't been any new industries springing up on the waterfront to hire even the unemployed dockworkers.

"It's the worst season I've seen since the depression", says an old-time freighthandler.

"I can't feed my crippled wife and seven boys on \$33 a week in unemployment insurance," said longshoremen Elmer Morris.

"Some of the guys coming from out of town don't make enough money to pay the parking meter," said another longshoremen who made \$8,000 two years ago.

While the "experts" and shipping magnates travel the world praising the "glorious developments" connected with containerization and promising thousands of new jobs, the 700 members of the freighthandlers union, the Brotherhood of Railway, Airline and Steamship Clerks (Lodge 246), and the 850 members of the International Longshoremen's Association (Local 269) are now being crushed and forced out of work by the new "mechanical monster" at Pier

Many of the unemployed men see the container crane as their enemy. "One of these nights you may find that god damn crane blown up," said a bitter longshoremen who has 18 years of work behind him on the docks.

However, it is not a strategy of "fighting the machine" but rather "fighting for the benefits from the machine" that will actually help dockworkers.

As a freighthandler said angrily, "we're being completely left out. We should be getting at least our share of the benefits from containerization. It's going to be some fight."

How true. Scientific progress and new methods of work don't have to mean empty stomachs. The dockworkers obviously deserve financial returns for the enormous productivity increases. For 30 years of dedicated service, there should be some compensation, not a welfare check and lonely hours on a hiring hall bench.

WHO'S THE ENEMY?

Who has got the benefits, then, from containerization? There are the container companies, Dart Containerline, Atlantic Containerline, Columbus Line and Caribbean Line. There are the industrial concerns in the Upper Canada and the U.S. who get their goods sent and received more quickly. There is the CNR which provides the unit training. And there are those who control Halterm — the province, the city, the CNR (again, in on the action) and Clarke Traffic Services, a shipping company from Montreal.

These groups have scooped up all the benefits and left behind them anarchy and chaos for the hiring hall, for the futures of the men and even the future of the port as a source of jobs.

The employment statistics tell the depressing story, especially for the freighthandlers. In the first week of March 1964, the number of freighthandler gangs, hired mostly 6-man gangs, ranged from 89 to 102. In the first week of March 1971, the number of gangs hired, mostly 4-man gangs, ranged from 6 to 41, the highest of the year.

In the "peak" winter months of the mid-1960's,

more than 550 men were employed every day for weeks on end. Often during this past winter, hirings were less than 75 men for weeks and weeks.

Comparing the June figures, in 1964 the hirings ranged between 10 and 15, 6-man gangs. In 1971, the June hirings for an average week were 1 gang, no gangs, no gangs, 2 morning gangs, 1 gang and 1 gang.

Many of the freighthandlers didn't make enough this winter to keep up payments on unemployment insurance. The benefits are running out fast as many try to make a few bucks fishing or house painting. Many freighthandlers aren't even expected back this coming winter.

"Containers are no help to labour in the Port of Halifax. And I can't see how the future will get any better," said Freighthandlers business agent Herb Woodley.

Containerization and the decreased business in traditional shipping has also cut into the wages of longshoremen of the ILA. In 1970, Halifax stevedoring companies paid out only \$3.2 million in wages to longshoremen. This is nearly \$2 million less than in 1969.

"Two years ago I made around \$8000. This year I've made \$2100 so far," said a longshoremen who would move to Montreal if he were younger.

"The Port Officials keep telling us that tonnage is up. But that's not helping us any."

The number of tons passing through the port means very little if there is no labor handling the cargo. Indeed, the Port of Halifax could become like a "whistle stop" or switching station for trains on the Canadian Prairies. Hundreds of trains still pass through but none of them ever stays long enough to provide any local benefits or employment.

If the Port of Halifax is reduced to a giant crane or transfer point and none of the cargo is handled locally

Women workers exploited

by Ruth Gamberg

A friend of mine who works in a laundry in a city in Nova Scotia gets \$1.30 an hour. I know another person who does the same work, has the same amount of experience and gets \$1.70 an hour. The only difference between the two is that the first one is a woman and the other is a man. But there's nothing very unusual about that. If you're a woman working as an intermediate clerk in an office in Truro, you'll make about \$70 a week, but if you're a man doing the same job, you'll make \$121.

There are supposed to be laws to protect women workers from such abuse. Nova Scotia has an Equal Pay Act — on paper. It says that women have to get equal pay with men for doing equal work. But, like most laws,

that's an easy one for the bosses to get around. All they have to do is classify the same job differently for men and women and pay the women less.

The law makers give themselves away though and prove that they aren't really serious about the Equal Pay Act anyway by contradicting themselves with another law — the Minimum Wage Act. This one, without any camouflage, gives bosses the go-ahead to discriminate against women workers by paying them a lower minimum wage than men. Worse yet, the law doesn't even require any minimum wage at all for certain kinds of jobs that are done almost exclusively by women like domestic work and baby sitting.

"WOMEN WORK OVERTIME"

The excuse is sometimes given that women don't work as hard as men and so they shouldn't be paid as much. Let's look again at my friend the laundry worker, who is married and has children. In the first place, she runs the risk of losing her job and therefore her income altogether if she gets pregnant because her boss, like most, does not give maternity leaves. Secondly, since there are no day care facilities for her children, a large share of her miserably small earnings has to go to pay for baby sitters. After working for 8 hours, she comes home to another full-time job of taking care of the house and family.

After she has paid the baby sitter, her weekly wage of \$52 has dwindled to only \$32. Anyone who works 75 hours for \$32 cannot be accused of not working for her money!

According to statistics from the N.S. Department of Labour, in 1961, and things haven't gotten any better since, just under 50% of male workers compared to nearly 84% of female workers received yearly wages of less than

\$3,000, the official government poverty line.

Not only are women paid less than men, but they also have more difficulty getting jobs. Less than 25% of women in Nova Scotia are able to find jobs compared to nearly 3 times as many men. The lie that is often given to supposedly explain this is that women don't want to work. But like men, most women have to work whether they want to or not. Over half the women workers are unmarried, widowed or divorced. They have no choice. The married women workers also have no choice because their husbands are paid so little that they can't make ends meet. And then there are all the other women, the vast majority, who do not work simply because they can't. There are no jobs for them.

Why is it woman's work to be an office clerk but not an office manager? Why is it woman's work to be a nurse and not a doctor? Why is it woman's work in some factories to be a machine operator but not a foreman?

"CAPITALISM IS THE REAL EXPLOITER"

There are two main reasons why under capitalism women are doubly exploited. Because the bosses make more profits the less wages they pay, they put forward the myth, the idea, that women are less able to do certain jobs as well as men and therefore can pay them even less.

A second reason for paying extra low wages is to use them to threaten the wage demands of men. The boss tells the men who come to him for increased wages that if they don't like their present wages they can leave and he will hire women for less wages.

That is why, for example, salesmen in Canada in 1965

were paid an average of \$5,287 a year while saleswomen got \$2,077 for doing the same kind of work. Certainly salesmen don't work 2½ times harder or do the job 2½ times better than saleswomen! Yet they are paid \$2.55 for every dollar saleswomen get.

Men workers do not exploit women workers by getting jobs more easily or by getting higher pay. Women workers do not exploit men by being forced to take lower pay. Exploitation occurs because of the system we are forced to in, namely capitalism, and the people who run the system, the capitalists. Men and women alike must understand that they are engaged in a common struggle.

A strategy for the unemployed

by Agricola

Unemployment is a way of life for many Canadian working men and women. Under Canadian capitalism, "full employment" means that at least 4 or 5% of the labour force are always unemployed. And in the Maritimes, "good times" mean that 8% of the work force are unemployed. In crisis times, like last winter, the figure reaches over 25% in places such as Cape Breton.

In response to this desperate situation for many working people and with the understanding that unemployment is not a temporary, isolated phenomenon which will disappear when the government has "solved" the problem of inflation, more and more people are getting involved in unemployed organizing. In Nova Scotia, the two major efforts, to date, have been the Halifax-Dartmouth Union of Unemployed and the Cape Breton Union of the Unemployed. Organizers of these groups and others across Canada are discovering that this type of organizing is beset with special problems and requires unique solutions. The following article discusses both these problems and suggests some basic strategical possibilities.

Immediately, it must be recognized that the unemployed are generally a more unstable group to organize than citizens groups or unions. Among the short-term unemployed, there is no guarantee that a well-organized base will not be wiped out if people suddenly find jobs. Among the longer-term unemployed there is a strong tendency to migrate in search of jobs. From the experiences in Nova Scotia, it also appears that militant leadership and potential leadership tend to find jobs before their fellows.

The problem of instability leads to a question of the purposes of organizing the unemployed. For instance, if the aim of the unemployment union is to find people jobs, there then exists a contradiction between successful organizing and building a strong organization which can in an ongoing way, try to solve some of the immediate problems of the unemployed. This could partially be overcome by having the membership of the organization open to all workers, employed and unemployed and forming an executive from among this group. They could provide the necessary continuity and stability.

NO WAGE SLAVES

A second problem is whether unemployed groups should aim at returning their members to productive employment as "wage slaves" with no conditions attached. No jobs security, poor working conditions, low wages, no trade union — how much better is it than being unemployed? Moreover, can such groups really "solve" the problem of unemployment in the same way as a single-issue citizens group can get better recreational facilities. Both problems point to the type of demands to be made and the nature of organizing.

In the long run, it seems unlikely that unemployment groups, by themselves, will be able to wipe out unemployment. In order for capitalists to make the largest possible profit, they have to restrict the amount of goods workers produce to get the highest possible price. If there are too many people working, there will be too many people with enough money for too few goods. This drives prices

up even further and cause "inflation." It means that until we get rid of capitalism we will always have unemployment or inflation which, in turn, always leads back to unemployment.

Thus, unless the unemployment group is linked to political organizing which seeks to get rid of capitalism, it will be limited to putting forward short-term demands and solutions.

TWO DEMANDS

There are two types of demands to be put forward: the first are simply defensive, that is, all debts or bills for essential needs such as food, rent, clothing, electricity, health, heating, etc. should be cancelled and these services provided free until the individual is again employed. Militant picketing can be set up for defense.

The second type are demands which attempt to put the group on the offensive. To begin with, there should be a minimum standard established on the types of jobs that will be accepted which might include guarantees of the minimum wage, employment in a union shop, etc. In general, demands for retraining and for employment should be directed against private capitalist interests rather than the government. It is the private capitalists who lay off workers and cause the hardships; they should also be forced to bear the costs involved in retraining rather than the government (and hence taxpayers — they don't shut down the plants).

COLLECTIVE ACTION

Building confidence, solidarity, and a feeling of accomplishment are crucial to an organization whose actions can often lead to failure and pessimism. Success in this aspect can be developed by first creating a solid internal organization. This means constant and meaningful participation in the organization and its decisions and collective action. The long stretches of time that are available to the unemployed should be used to conduct political education, general education and self-help sessions.

Secondly, external activity should be collective and action-oriented. If a whole plant shut down and there is sudden spurt in unemployment, efforts should be made to keep the work force of a particular plant together as a fighting force. The militant actions of the Montreal Lapalme drivers are a good example. Ongoing militant and collective action ensures that the problem of unemployment is kept before the eyes of the people of the area and gives a sense of solidarity and usefulness to the group.

The fight against unemployment must go on at two levels; the fight for solutions to immediate needs and problems can, with good organizing, provide the basis for the important fight of ridding our society of



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Fishermen lead the struggle for progressive unionism

Everett Richardson. Edison Lumsden. Billy Parker. Leo Quann. Con Mills. Stan Cooper. These men and more than 100 others are the fighting fishermen of Canso and Mulgrave.

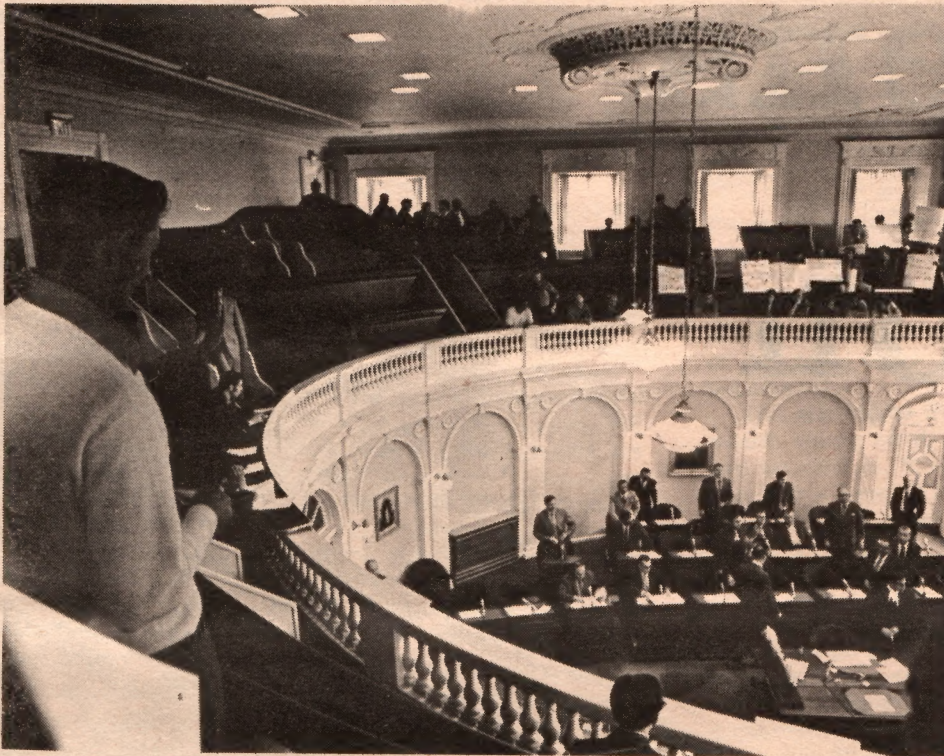
The men want the union of their own choice. In March, they won the right to trade union representation. Since that time, the fight has been over whether the fishermen will have as their union, the United Fishermen and Allied Workers' Union (UFAWU), or a union that the company has rammed down their throats, the Chicago-based Canadian Food and Allied Workers' Union (CFAWU). In the following article ECSM member Martin Langille, who has been closely involved in the 16 month struggle, takes a look at the militant example that the fishermen have set for the labour movement in Nova Scotia.

Just over 20 years ago the Canadian Seaman's Union was smashed by an alliance of company bosses, company unionists, and a pro-company government. That was during the days when left-wing unions and union leaders were declared fair game by the right wing of the trade union movement in accordance with the wishes of the bosses.

The right wing grabbed control of the labour movement — led by people like Donnie "the Duke" MacDonald and his Friends of the Bosses Society with the CLC — and workers have been forced to toe the company-government line ever since. The result has been a particularly vicious brand of "defensive unionism" in which workers energy and spirit have been drained out in a vain effort to hang on to gains that had already been won.

Fortunately though, the dominance of right wing led defensive unionism is being challenged more and more, and a new vigor and spirit are being injected back into the trade union movement. In Nova Scotia that renewed fighting spirit is best displayed in the struggle of the Canso Strait fishermen.

The determination of the fishermen has surprised a lot of people. It has been a real shock to plant managers like A. L. Cadegan who, at the beginning of last year's strike, were predicting a quick and easy victory for the companies. It rocked the Tory Government which thought it could simply ignore the whole affair. And it has caused alarm in the ranks of the CLC establishment which is not used to having its bankrupt policies so openly exposed. Finally, it has been a pleasant surprise for progressive trade unionists, both here and across the country, who have been rather disillusioned by the last 20 years of un-



UFAWU organizer Edison Lumsden interrupts the emergency Legislature session during a protest over the recent final certification of the Meat-Cutters (CFAWU) as the bargaining agent for Canso fishermen.

inspired, sometimes gutless, trade unionism.

The history of the fishermen's fight has been a series of obstacles, each of which was supposed to be the final straw to break the back of their resistance. Even in the beginning the odds were set solidly against them. What they were undertaking was far more than the usual bid for higher wages or better work conditions. It was a battle against 20 years of legal suppression by the Government and 200 years of ruthless exploitation and abuse by the companies. Against all this opposition was set a small handful of men and women, most of whom had never witnessed or been involved in a strike in their lives.

But when the companies over and over again refused to give voluntary recognition to the fishermen's union — the UFAWU — the men took the necessary initiative; on March 30, 1970, they tied up the boats and brought the companies to a standstill. Plant workers, who readily recognized the justice of the fishermen's struggle, defied company threats of firings and plant closures and refused to cross the picket lines.

The highlights of the fishermen's strike, the manner in which they again and again rebuffed the attempts of companies, government, news media, and

the courts to break their endurance, are familiar to most workers in Nova Scotia. When the courts sided with the companies and issued anti-picketing injunctions, the fishermen stood fast. When the courts attempted to carry out their threats by jailing many of the men, those who remained stayed on the picket lines. They were joined there by their wives and the wives of the men who had gone to jail.

What followed from this display of courage and determination has proved to be one of the finest hours in the history of the Nova Scotia labour movement. Over 7,000 workers, inspired by the fighting example of the fishing communities and disgusted by the blatant anti-unionism of the courts, walked off their jobs in a display of militant solidarity. Only a hasty reversal of policy by the government and the courts and threats by right wing CLC hatchetmen kept the numbers from increasing. As it was, Everett Richardson whom the courts had sentenced to 9 months in jail for walking a picket line, and the other men who had received lesser sentences, were enabled to return to the communities to carry on their fight.

When the fishermen returned to work in October, 1970, they had gained a first contract with the companies providing for substantial gains in both wages and work conditions. And they had wrestled

from the new Liberal Government a promise that the law, which for 24 years had barred them from trade union rights, would be changed. They returned to work knowing that no less determined or less militant a struggle could have forced that concession from the Government.

The fishermen's fight has now entered a new phase. Acadia Fisheries has been forced to accept the men's demand for union recognition. The company strategy now is to ensure that that union is one which the company can control. At all costs it does not want to have to deal with the UFAWU, which first organized the fishermen and has stood solidly with them ever since.

So the company has given voluntary recognition to the CFAWU, an American-based union which had not even shown its face in the fishing communities until it appeared that all the fighting was over, and then came only on the invitation of the company. The response of the fishermen to this collusive agreement was immediate — 81 out of 107 of them refused to give up their allegiance to the UFAWU and were fired by the company.

In the time since their firing the fishermen have been stalled by the Labour Relations Board, the Unemployment Insurance Office, and the Welfare Office. Yet, even after what has seemed an endless fight for them, they continue to respond to new obstacles with the same militancy and solidarity that had characterized their whole struggle.

When a committee of prominent Nova Scotia citizens recently took a vote of the men, they displayed their continuing determination to have the union of their own choice by voting 66 to 3 in favour of the United Fishermen and Allied Workers. When it became obvious to everyone that the Labour Relations Board was refusing to accept the results of the vote, and the other evidence presented by the fishermen, including 89 signed membership cards and 81 unfair labour practice charges filed against the company, the men realized that they would have to use other methods to guard their rights. To force the Labour Relations Board and other Government agencies to stop their stalling, the men decided to take over one of the boats — the Acadia Gull.

The occupation of the Gull was not an arbitrary, off-handed stunt as some of the news media have been trying to picture it. It was based on a number of important considerations — the fishermen's knowledge that those boats, which Acadia Fisheries claims as its private property, were paid for out of the taxes of Canadian workers, and their conviction that the real purpose of those boats must be to supply fishermen with their natural and necessary means of earning a livelihood.

Kill jobs

or destined for local industries, what value is it to us?

Take what has happened at the Port of St. John, the main east-coast competitor of Halifax. In an interview last December port official H. S. Gregory said that 99% of the containers going through his port are bound for Upper Canada and the U.S. Only 1% stay in the Maritimes.

75% of the containers destined for Montreal have a final destination within a 75 mile radius of Montreal. It is at Montreal where there are the few jobs connected with containerization; here the port crews "stuff" and "unstuff" the containers.

Gregory also made it quite clear that there was no significant increases in unemployment in St. John or New Brunswick as a result of containerization.

Yet the propagandists for Halterm keep up their pitch about all the new jobs that will come in time. When government planner Leonard Poetschke was asked, at the 1970 Port of Halifax Day, about what specific jobs would be created, he couldn't answer.

No wonder. The whole idea of containerization is to cut down on labour and get the cargo through the port

as quickly as possible. The July 1969 issue of Container News, the bosses trade publication, explained that the basic concept is "to move containers directly out of the port area without cargo handling, inspection, checking or manipulation and without delay — in short, without the usual port cargo flow interruptions and hindrances."

The Freighthandlers have attempted to get the government to do something. They met with Gerry Regan on February 17. He promised to see them again in 10 days but never did.

"Gerry was gladhanding the boys at the hiring hall at election time in October. Now he has no time for us," said a veteran freighthandler.

MP Bob McCleave brought it up in the House of Commons. As expected, nothing has been done to help the men in their plight.

As few resolutions were brought up at last year's Federation of Labour convention. Again, there has been no action.

Some of the men can't figure it all out. "We haven't had a strike on the waterfront for many years", some say.

Yet, it is only militant and decisive action by the dockworkers and not Regan, Trudeau or the present Federation bureaucrats and misleaders which will bring

some justice and compensation to the dockworkers.

Worker's opposition can shape up the "container bosses" and force them to give up some of their power and profits.

On the U.S. west coast, the longshoremen made sure that they got some of the benefits of containerization and modernization. They forced the companies to set up a fund into which was channeled money saved because of the productivity increases. By the end of the first contract period in June 1966, this fund totalled 29 million dollars which was distributed among the workers. Other benefits included a guaranteed work week for all men and special retirement and pension funds for early leavers.

At the Canadian river ports of Montreal, Three Rivers, and Quebec City, the men forced their bosses to give them some compensations after a series of slowdowns, legal and illegal strikes.

Today, St. Lawrence longshoremen have a guaranteed 40 hour work week during the 37 week shipping season. And they make almost \$4.50 an hour from the Shipping Federation of Canada.

The big question that remains is whether the men of Halifax will be fighting for the same basic rights that dockworkers have gained elsewhere.

Regan Tightens Vice on Labour

Just as the first issue of the East Coast Worker was going to press, the Nova Scotia government announced further repressive labour legislation, in the form of Bill 1. We did not have time or space to do a complete analysis of this oppressive bill. What follows is our original article on anti-labour legislation which should serve as a background to the introduction of Bill 1. Next month a fuller explanation of the most recent legislation is planned.

by ECSM Labour Committee

The drafting and enforcement of labour legislation was a "some-time thing" in Nova Scotia until the late 1960's. As former Tory labour minister Tom McKeogh conceded in June at the Dalhousie Labour Institute, "the policies grew up like topsy". And when the province started to become more and more industrialized and secondary manufacturing increased, the government wasn't ready for the inevitable class conflicts and industrial warfare that resulted.

"I think Bob Stanfield, my former boss, was one of the most responsible for the labour unrest in the last few years" said McKeogh. He was admitting that, in all the boasts about "economic development", those who control both the political and economic machinery of this province, the ruling class, had forgotten one thing — how to ensure that the newly-forming industrial working class who produced this expanding wealth would be kept on the job in the face of numerous contradictions.

These contradictions came up most clearly in the construction industry. As more and more men were forced off the farms and out of the various primary industries such as mining and fishing by the anarchy of capitalist production, the construction work force was swelled. With no history of either passive trade unionism or docile submission to the construction barons this particular group of workers exhibited rank-and-file militancy and resistance to both the powers of management and the oppressive nature of industrial production.

UNSAFE WORKING CONDITIONS

On the various job sites, the men found unsafe working conditions, and unfit facilities such as the unsanitary toilets at Michelin. Tough-talking foremen forced wildcats when necessary materials were unavailable at the sites like the heavy water plant in Glace Bay.

Layoffs were common and the work force was expected to move around the province as prospects opened up or shut down. Unions became embroiled in jurisdictional disputes and union leaders were more often interested in empire-building than fighting for the just demands of their men for security and safe working conditions.

At the same time, various government agencies such as Industrial Estates Limited were making "sweetheart deals" with international capitalist interests, promising them tax incentives, interest-free loans, direct handouts and other government favours. One favour they had difficulty in giving was a passive, stable workforce willing to accept exploitation and oppression without a whimper.

1970 was a heavy year for what the bosses and government officials call "illegal work stoppages." Thousands of workers walked out the UEAWU fishermen at Canso were jailed for picketing. Construction workers shut down a number of projects to protest the methods of the construction bosses. In total, almost 250,000 man-days of production were lost to the employers of Nova Scotia through strikes and wildcats.

A Crisis was upon the government. Would they attempt to establish and enforce laws about safe working conditions? Would they help build an economy which would provide stable and regular employment in construction and other industries? Would they help

build trade union democrats, construction barons and intern profits were "safe" and untouchable.

REGAN SIDES WITH

As one would expect in a government sided with the interests. The Nova Scotia government launch their own version of an engulfing all advanced capital.

An unopposed attack on prepare the groundwork for the coming few years, into a Such a campaign would be way of continued super-profit crisis, the government and rising prices and high unemployment back, it means slicing into the prevented by using the power only real weapon — the strike.

Some labour leaders have isolating the construction workers think they will be immune from The RCMP's "investigation" only a hint of things to come contrary.

Working people must not workers to be isolated. In B "Rand Report" and Bill 16 "tions Bill". Nova Scotia is a machine" for an assault on the

A beginning was made by session in December. This was the way.

CHANGES DURING

At the December session amendments were made to the

Section 19a provides for in the construction industry. I ment of a single arbitrator dispute or difference over the minister of labour can step arbitrator must then make extension is agreed to by both final and legally binding on both

Under Section 44B, it is of \$1,000 to \$10,000 to violate

Section 56A establishes the Labour Relations Board, and two other members can exercise all the powers, author

British workers fight labour

A large number of strikes and a general upsurge in the struggles of labour have rocked Britain over the past few years. It is in the face of this increasing unrest that the Tory government of Prime Minister Heath created the Industrial Relations Bill. However this was not the first attempt at legally sterilizing the militant potential of the labour movement. Wilson's Labour government which pretended to represent the interests of the working class, made an attempt in 1969 to put through the "In Place of Labour Strife" bill which was nothing less than a full scale attack on organized labour. Such attempts to crush the working class have made it quite clear to the workers of Britain that both the Labour and the Tory parties exist only to peddle the interests of the 1% of the population who own 81% of the industry to the unwilling and vast majority of the people.

The recent Tory Bill is a long and detailed document seeking to set up a large bureaucracy of government agencies with enormous powers to interfere in the activities of Trade Unions.

The National Industrial Relations Court, for example, was designed to stop strikes in so-called "national emergencies" and to enforce agreements between an employer and a union when one or both parties have not consented. Moreover, these agreements are made legally binding unless the employer puts a clause into the contract to the contrary.

This law, clearly forces union leaders to police contracts they never agreed to, because otherwise they would be break-

ing the law or committing an "unfair labour practice". If the men strike "illegally" the union must force them back to jail or be faced with heavy fines or jail sentences.

Under another section of the Bill the unions must "register" with a government registrar. The registrar tells the union who can or cannot be admitted for membership and who is eligible to run for union leadership. Trade union democracy becomes reduced to a tea party. If a "workers' organization" does not register it is not officially designated as a trade union and companies can refuse to collectively bargain with the union.

WORKERS LOSE ALL RIGHTS

Other clauses of the Bill are especially designed to encourage and protect scabs. The closed shop agreement, where every worker must join the union, is now outlawed. In face an employer is obliged by law to tell all employees that they don't have to join a union. There is, of course, no provision in the Bill to prevent a non-union member from enjoying the benefits which the union wins in the negotiations with the employer.

Since the Registrar determines how and when a union member will be disciplined it is clear that unions will be unable to deal with scabs. For instance, it is an "unfair labour practice" to try to have an employee dismissed. The employer cannot be pressured to get rid of a scab. If a worker refuses to work with a scab he will be causing an "unfair dismissal" which is illegal. Finally,

picketing at a person's house is illegal which protects the scab (to say nothing of the boss). This "crime" can lead to imprisonment for up to three months.

Some of the provisions dealing with dismissal are nothing short of incredible. If a worker is fired, he can take legal action against his former employer. However he has to find another job in the meanwhile because if he wins the case he will be awarded damages only for the time lost between jobs. If he doesn't find a second job he will get nothing even if he wins his case in court. Also the courts cannot order an employer to re-hire the worker.

If and when a worker goes to court it is he who has to prove that he has been fired unfairly. And the Bill, helpfully for the employer, has a long list of grounds for "fair dismissal". All of this, by the way, only applies if the worker has been continuously employed for more than two years, otherwise there is no case.

But there's more. Another clause states that if a worker is fired for taking part in any industrial action (such as a strike) it is unfair, but if more than one worker is fired it is fair! So the moment more than one worker walks off the job they face the possibility of being fired legally.

The Bill includes a long list of "unfair labour practices" a few of which have been mentioned. For the most part they are clearly aimed at crushing rank and file participation and trade union strength. For example, all sympathy strikes without exception are illegal. There is, of course, no clause preventing

the employers from getting together to defeat a strike.

It is also illegal to support an "unfair industrial practice" in any way. This includes writing an article in support of such an action. This provision is directly aimed at many progressive and left-wing newspapers who provide the opposition to the attacks of establishment papers on such actions.

RANK AND FILE FIGHTS BACK

When the Bill was finally introduced in the British Parliament trade unionists in Britain were hopping mad. In a well organized "Kill the Bill" campaign two 'unofficial' one day work stoppages were called. One on Dec. 18 and the other on Jan. 12 of this year involved hundreds of thousands of workers and cost British industry well over 500,000 working days.

Again on March 1 and March 18 similar calls for work stoppages met with overwhelming success and led to widespread industrial disruption.

On Jan. 12 the Trades Union Congress (similar to Canada's CLC) called for a protest meeting to occur after working hours. However trade union militants led by Hugh Scanlon President of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers urged workers to lay down their tools during working hours. Over 180,000 workers did just that.

On the evening of that same Jan. 12 over 6,000 workers assembled at the TUC protest meeting to listen not to the smooth words of moderates but to the heckles and the chants for effective action.

At a conference on Feb. 5 with delegates representing about 1,400,000

engineering introduced day strikes action was passed

The high Feb. 12 workers marched on the largest demonstration ever seen. They chanted "We Strike" and demanded that the government must try to oppose the

The final committee of

Worker's Union policy of not be used with Relations Bill

The scheme unions become non-cooperative to accept the withdrawal

withdrawal industrial tribunals represent the established agencies the establishment

At a meeting a series of

Now that has become a state and refused to accept these plans

It is likely signed to the labour movement vicious struggle

? Or would they side with the con-
tional financiers to ensure that their
ched by labour militancy?

H CONSTRUCTION BOSSES

class society, the newly-elected Regan
construction bosses and capitalist
ing class had decided it was time to
the vicious anti-labour crusade which is
t countries.

he construction workers could slowly
urther legislation which will erupt over
ull-blown campaign of class repression.
med at all workers who stood in the
In the midst of a period of economic
business will seek to lay the blame for
ymment on labour. When labour fights
profits of the bosses. This can only be
rs of the state against labour and its

been fooled by the Regan strategy of
rkers for the first legal attack. They
n government repression.

of the SYSCO wildcat in May is
e, despite all the explanations to the

be fooled or allow the construction
C. it was Bill 2. In Ontario it was the
Britain has its own "Industrial Rela-
st now gearing up its own "repressive
hard-won rights of labour.

he Regan government at the legislature
k has seen new laws. And more are on

DECEMBER SITTING

the following major changes and
Trade Union Act:

"statutory arbitration" of disputes
oth parties must agree to the appoint-
y midnight of the same day as the
collective agreement arises. If not, the
n and make the appointment. The
decision within 48 hours unless an
n parties. The arbitrator's decision is
h parties.

made an offense punishable by fines
an arbitrator's decision.

a "Construction Industry Panel" of
he panel is composed of a chairmen
sen by the cabinet. The panel can
ity, and jurisdiction of the Board but

it can also decide, with the consent of the cabinet, that certain rules
of the Board do not apply to it or it may make its own rules and
regulations.

— Section 41 doubles the maximum penalties for unlawful strikes
or lockouts to \$200 a day for individuals and \$300 for trade unions
or employers.

— The general penalties, under Section 42, for violations of the
Act (other than those penalties specifically laid down in the Act)
change from \$100 to \$1000 for individuals and from \$500 to
\$10,000 for unions and employers.

When the legislature was proposed in the fall, leaders of the
Federation of Labour and NDP legislative members were not exactly
overwhelming in their response.

NDP leader Jeremy Ackermen felt that "some fines were too
severe" and should be cut in half.

Federation leaders John Lynk and Leo Mackay also felt that "the
fines were too harsh." But they said "it looks promising and encour-
aging to us" and pledged "we'll do all we can to help make the
experiment work."

Will these supposed union leaders ever learn the wisdom of the
trade union saying that "an injury to one is an injury to all?"

Since the legislation was passed it has had one significant ap-
plication. After protesting the lack of decent toilet facilities at the
Michelin construction site in Bridgewater for a number of days and
getting no response from contractors, a number of workers staged
wildcat strikes on January 29 and February 1.

They were charged with breaking recent amendments to the
Trade Union Act. On June 2, Judge Hiram Carver pronounced 10
members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
(Local 1818) and a shop steward guilty of various offenses. The
fines assessed were quite small.

The union was also charged with "authorizing an illegal strike."

In handing out the sentences, Judge Carver described the toilet
facilities as "unfit and totally not in keeping with present day
toilet facilities." Needless to say, no fines were assessed against the
contractors.

Other workers at the Michelin Granton plant were also charged.

The first conviction of workers had only incurred small fines.
But, in fact, small fines were just what the attorney general's depart-
ment had mapped out. Instead of demanding heavy fines which
would obviously stir up the labour movement, the department had
decided on a strategy of beginning small. Slowly, cases could be
built up and slowly erosions made. When the maximum fine of
\$1,000 per may and \$10,00 per union was required, the department
thinks that the necessary precedents and lack of labour action will
make "the bombshell" easier to drop.

The cry of the Regan government that "production postponed is
production lost" also has a hollow ring to it. If business and govern-
ment were so concerned about lost production they would act
against industrial accidents, unemployment, sickness and out-
migration.

In 1969, while 87,000 may days of production were lost through
strikes and lockouts, almost 25,000 industrial accidents (including
45 deaths) were reported to the Workmen's Compensation Board.
How many man days of production were lost because of company
irresponsibility? One can be sure it was more than the number of
days lost through strikes and lockouts. At the 1969 level of un-
employment, it was estimated that over 3,000,000 man days were
lost because thousands of men and women were forced to sit idle
due to a lack of jobs. And, the talents and skills of countless
thousands of men and women are lost to Nova Scotia each year

From the examples set in other provinces and in Britain it is in-
creasingly clear that if the Nova Scotia labour movement hesitates
in the least in fully opposing current legislation it will be nothing
short of a disaster.

The present attack on the construction workers is a divide and
rule tactic designed to prevent the labour movement from putting
aside its differences and attacking the legislation with unity and
force.

It is crucial, then, that the labour movement come together with
the construction unions to forge rank-and-file links and to mobilize
under a single banner.

This fight must be carried on by the labour movement itself: it
cannot fall back on the parliamentary tactics of the NDP or on the
efforts of interested groups. Only the combined force of the workers
of this province has the strength to pressure the government into
backing off.

This also means that workers cannot simply rely on leadership to
mouth strong words or to have closed door meetings with Regan
and his cabinet. It is the mistaken opinion of many union leaders
that Gerry Regan is a friend of labour. Anybody who has listened to
his statements about paving the way clear for foreign capitalists
knows that the only way that those carpetbaggers can make a profit
is off the backs of a passive and docile working class. It is Gerry's
job to make sure that the workers are made that way.

As a move towards full-scale opposition the labour movement
should set up a province-wide co-ordinating committee to map out a
strategy. A bare-bones beginning would be the publication and rank-
and-file dissemination of pamphlets describing and analysing the
legislation. Any briefs presented on behalf of labour should also get
wide distribution among workers. It is strange that while other
provincial federations considered such information essential and
elementary the Nova Scotia Federation has yet to publish a single
word.

As a further step district trades and labour councils should
organize demonstrations in major cities possibly winding up with a
mass rally in front of the legislature in Halifax. If Regan fails to get
the message one day work-stoppages could be co-ordinated which
he could not help but recognize hits at the pocket books of his
capitalist buddies.

The point is that labour has to build rank-and-file opposition
(public opinion) and it has to do it now. For workers to sit back and
wait is to invite another kick in the teeth from Gerry's iron boot.

bill

and allied workers, Scanlon
resolution calling for one
cross the nation. The resolu-
ed overwhelmingly.

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en over 100,000 workers
Trafalgar Square. It was the
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ilitants in the crowd who
want action" and "General
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at the trade union move-
se its "full industrial strength
Bill".

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he Transport and General
ion drew up a six point
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became law.

he included suggestions that
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ion days, as well as refusing
legally enforced agreements,
of members from any in-
of members from any in-
nals, and refusal to nomin-
atives from newly estab-
as under the Bill, and finally,
ment of a legal defense fund.
ing on March 18 of the TUC
ilar proposals were passed.

the Industrial Relations Bill
law (with the aid of moder-
tionary TUC officials who
support walkoffs and strikes)
e going into effect.

nic. The Bill that was de-
ush the militancy of the
ent has provoked the most
gle which is yet to come.

... as Canada digs in

"Class legislation at its worst," said
Orville Bratten, president of the Pulp and
Paper Workers of Canada Union.

This was the reaction of labour leaders
when the Socred government of W.A.C.
Bennett passed the Mediation Com-
mission Act or Bill 33 in April 1968.

It certainly was class legislation. The
Bill provides that where a dispute arises
the Bennett cabinet may, at their sole
discretion, order that employees not be
permitted to strike, and where a strike
already exists to cease within 24 hours
"to protect the public interest" (read
bosses interest). If the workers involved
are not back at work within 24 hours, the
union is liable to fines up to \$10,000 and
workers up to \$1,000 plus \$150 per day.

The Bill gives the cabinet the right to
decide who will withdraw their labor.
Labour's only weapon — the bosses have
a whole arsenal — has effectively been
defused.

Through a whole set of clauses and
procedures, such as a government-
appointed Mediation Commission, the
government enters collective bargaining
with the big club of "compulsory arbi-
tration."

Who is such a Bill protecting? Who
drafted it? None other than J. V. Clyne,
chairman of MacMillan Bloedel which
controls nearly all the forest resources of
B.C., was very active in drafting the
legislation and, in December 1967, out-
lined the Bill, clause by clause, at a
businessmen's luncheon.

On February 21, 1968 the Federation
of Labour presented its view to the
legislature. The legislation was introduced
that same afternoon unchanged. The
Federation launched its attack but it was

only a verbal attack — press releases,
name calling, resolutions, leaflets. Only
the progressive unions like the Pulp
Workers and the United Fishermen's and
Allied Workers Union seriously pressed
for decisive rank-and-file action — a
general strike of protest.

As workers and union leaders went to
jail and got stiff fines, the Federation and
the NDP united behind the slogan of
"elect the NDP and all will be well."

In the upcoming election the NDP was
trounced by the Socreds. But working
men began to realize that all would not
have been well even if the NDP had been
elected. Leader Bennett announced
during the election that he was not afraid
of unions and would fight them when
necessary. He walked through more than
one picket line during the campaign to
prove his point.

With no organized campaign of re-
sistance and support of unions under
attack, the government now has a free
hand to ensure that business keeps taking
huge profit from the weakened workers
of B.C.

Saskatchewan

When in 1966 a dispute arose between
the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers
and the government-owned Saskatchewan
Power Commission Premier Ross Thatch-
er found his excuse to summon the legis-
lature and push through his "Essential
Services Act".

Known as Bill 2 it was aimed at
prohibiting the right to strike in any
operation furnishing or supplying water
operation "furnishing or supplying water,
heat, electricity or gas service to the
public" and also applied to hospital

workers in the province.

The word "strike" had been defined
to include "a slow down or other con-
certed activity on the part of employees
designed to restrict or limit output".

It meant that workers in these in-
dustries had to submit to compulsory
arbitration when the cabinet decided that
an emergency exists. A union which fails
to comply can be decertified — put out
of operation — and be subject to fines of
\$1,000 per day.

While the Bill applied to the power
workers it was soon used against the
hospital workers in Prince Albert and
Estevan. But the intent of the Bill became
explicit when it was used against con-
struction workers in the Spring of 1970
and against pulp and paper workers in
June of that year.

The Saskatchewan Federation of
Labour mounted an information cam-
paign and a series of demonstrations
throughout the province during the
middle part of last year. Yet because
they failed to take strong stands and
demand militant action many workers
failed to realize the seriousness of Bill 2
and the government did not feel threaten-
ed by the SFL.

In February of this year, when
Thatcher introduced amendments to Bill
2 to cover all workers, he simply legal-
ized actions he had taken over the past
year.

Using the brief CNR strike of this
year as an excuse Thatcher then threaten-
ed to introduce labour courts into the
province. With the election of the NDP
time will tell whether the need to protect
capitalist investments will force them
also to bring in the hated legislation.

"Our lines are always open..." — reviewing talk-back shows

by Barb Harris

The seven o'clock news. The seven thirty headlines. The 8 o'clock news. The six o'clock report. The 11 o'clock national. The morning Chronicle. The evening Mail.

Every day, nearly every hour, news of the outside world enters the home ready processed by the magicians who collect and assemble it for easy digestion.

At home, the news consumer takes it in. He or she has no say in what news is considered important. He has no control over what version of the facts is presented as truth. Communications, like shopping in a supermarket, is a one-way process, with the listener-shopper always on the receiving end.

There is, however, one exception, one place for feedback and two-way communication, communication serving the function of bringing people together. Open-line shows provide a forum for public opinion, a place where everyone has a say, where people can talk about their ideas and problems. The open line shows keep people in touch with what's going on, and with each other. At least that's what they claim to do, but "If that's all you have to say, its no use even talking to you. Good bye madam! Our lines are always open at Radio X, just call . . ."

The lines on the talk back shows are always open, but they're not open to everything. They are open to opinions which fall within an acceptable range. Talk back shows give people some freedom to express their opinions, but the rest of the media makes sure that they have no freedom in forming them. The open line is only one part of a closed circle, and the "public opinion" which it pumps out is only an individual's interpretation of the news he or she is fed every day.

One can approve or disapprove of cutting able-bodied men off welfare, or of fishermen striking rich, international companies, but as long as the only information available on these subjects is presented by the established news media, public opinion is bound to be a reflection of that version of the truth. And that version is equally sure to be one designed to split and isolate working people, to twist and misinterpret their struggles so that they will not recognize their common enemies and their common interests.

Although the open line shows are based on the assumption that people have common interests and common problems, they treat these problems individually, as if each one just dropped from the sky.

Mrs. Smith, mother of 7 children, who has just been evicted from her apartment calls in, desperate, and the open line finds her a new home. But this does not deal with the problem of bad housing in general, and does nothing to help the hundreds of other listeners who also live in sub-standard, high-cost housing, and it will do nothing to help Mrs. Smith when her husband is laid off again, or the rent is raised.

The open line shows ignore the fact that a problem arises from a cause. Anything beyond a single issue is considered too complex to discuss. By keeping problems

separate, the moderator simplifies issues until they become ridiculous, and can dismiss explanations as side issues. It is as if an individual problem is the rotten apple in a good barrel, rather than a symptom of a greater problem. The barrel itself is not questioned, yet until the structure which creates the problems is analyzed and changed, there can be no real solutions. "Do you feel you are at the mercy of lawyers and doctors? Are you satisfied with your position as a woman? . . ."

The questions raised on the talk back shows give people a chance to voice their dissatisfaction, but create no method for people to deal with it. A call to the open line diverts people's justified anger and frustration, by pouring it into the open air. It provides temporary relief — a kind word or show of interest from the moderator helps to pass a boring morning, but solves nothing.

At home, the listener, who hears problem after problem, with few solutions, thinks again that if small problems are so complicated, the larger ones, like why some people are rich and others poor, can't even be touched.

The open line moderator often has a kind word or a show of sympathy for his callers. Like Robin Hood, he's got a reputation to look after. But he seldom takes a clear position on anything. Small problems are referred to someone else, "Call the Welfare Department," "Get in touch with the Tenancies Board," "Speak to the 'action gal' after the show," but no one really gets much information or satisfaction.

When larger issues come up, he remains just as uncommitted. This way he can be a friend to everyone, and everyone will continue to listen to his show. Yet, like a lawyer, he can take any side, and mix people up either way. And when things start to get too hot, and too many basic questions pop up . . .

"The issue is so cloudy, things have become so confused, its hard to know what's going on. No one really knows the truth . . ." The open line shows are used as a means to disorganize people. There is a deliberate attempt to confuse both caller and listener, by asking questions which lead away from important points, by interrupting, or by harping on petty issues.

The listener hears her neighbors interrupted, confused, yelled at, and put down. When there is a disagreement, the moderator can always discredit facts which oppose his and show his, and those of the established media, as lies. "Lady, your thinking mechanism isn't working 100% . . . That may be your opinion but . . . That's only hearsay." The moderator has control of the mike and the open line, he can cut people off, and is always guaranteed the last word.

By giving the impression that the caller doesn't really know what he or she is talking about, he keeps the listener from respecting people who phone in, and makes people who may have agreed with the caller feel that

they must be ignorant too.

The open line moderator acts like a grade-school principal, scolding a child who speaks out of turn and shaming it into silence. He isn't alone in this. Confusing people, making them feel they are stupid and incompetent is important in a society which must keep people "in their proper places." And the proper place for working and unemployed people, according to the owners and bosses who run the show, is at the bottom of the heap, far from wealth and power, and separated from each other.

If, instead of talking anonymously through an open line, neighbors gathered to discuss their common problems, they could work together towards joint solutions. Tenants associations, welfare rights groups, unemployment unions — people gathered to fight together, would not need to beg for the favour of decent housing, a job, or medicine for a child. Working together, and with other working people, they would have the power to enforce their demands, by making the basic changes necessary so that the needs of all working people can be met.

The open line could be used as a tool to aid this process, by helping people to analyse the overall situation, and organize to change it. For example, if Joe X is fired from his job for trying to organize a union, the open line could be used for a conference call between

Joe, the boss, and Joe's co-workers. The boss would be put on the spot to defend his position, and when this was not done to the satisfaction of the workers and the listeners, the open line could be used to organize a strike or a boycott against the boss.

It could also be used in more long-term ways. Rather than dealing with individual problems, they could analyze the more general problems of working people, like low wages, unemployment, bad working conditions. People could call in, as before, with specific problems, but they would also be encouraged to analyze these as part of an overall pattern, and to suggest solutions. People and groups working in these areas could make their ideas and suggestions known.

Who would moderate these shows? Not Pat Blanford! Not Marvin Burke! Working class people who face these problems every day, and whose interest it is to deal with them, are the real experts, and could act as moderators, collecting ideas and channeling them towards a general solution.

Some of these changes can be made, slowly, through pressure by community groups on the radio stations. But putting the communications industry into the hands of the working class would not be in the interest of the corporation fat cats who now own the media. If programs are to be run for the good of the people — that is to say the working class — then radio must be owned and controlled by those same people, so that they can define their own interests, their problems and their solutions.

— CLIPPINGS —

HALTERM NO FREE ENTERPRISER

Joe Howard, boss of Halterm, had to be talking out the other side of his mouth when he told the government that they should not subsidize the St. Lawrence Seaway. He said that "the people of the Great Lakes Waterways Development Association are free enterprisers and what they are advocating is that somebody else pay their way, which is not in the best tradition of free enterprise." Joe should know. Halterm got 13 million from the government to start his operation.

CAN'T JOIN UNION

Want to join a union? Check it with the boss. Want to run for a political party? Check it out. In the following edict to its workers, Gulf Oil at Port Hawkesbury makes it quite clear it doesn't believe in either the right to join a union or freedom of association:

"Some activities in which you may engage require special company approval. These would include: accepting or running for any office in the local, provincial

or federal government, speaking or writing to group concerning your work or the company or any activity which may conflict with your work or if in competition or detrimental to the interests of Gulf Oil Canada Ltd. Discuss any activity of the above nature with your supervisor before committing yourself." This is obviously aimed at international representative Fred Kihaneck and the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers Union, in their attempts at organizing the workers at Gulf.

THE BOSSES EAT WELL

It seems that everytime you turn on the radio or flip through a newspaper, there is another version of the bosses broken record: workers are making too much money and unions are getting too powerful. But those newspapers or radio stations never seem to tell you how rich or powerful the boss is getting — as if we should expect them to. Below are some samples from the corporate paychecks of executives who control American-owned

industries in Nova Scotia:

Owner	Salary and Stock Value
H. F. Dunning of	\$ 181,000
Scott Paper	\$ 536,000
H. Weigl of	\$ 175,000
Moir's Chocolate	\$ 1,157,000
E. D. Brockett of	\$ 250,000
Gulf Oil	\$ 3,014,000
A. P. Gon	
A. P. Fontaine of	\$ 122,000
General Instrum.	\$ 370,000
A. W. Eames Jr. of	\$ 110,000
Graves	\$ 571,000
R. B. Pamplin of	\$ 187,000
Georgia-Pacific	\$10,272,000

Anyone for a maximum wage law?

MAGAZINES

Also the current issue of *Last Post Magazine* has an article on the Canso fishermen. If you can't pick it up at a local bookstore requests for copies can be sent: *The Last Post*, P.O. Box 98, Station G., Montreal, Quebec.

EAST COAST WORKER

The East Coast Worker is published monthly by the East Coast Socialist Movement. It is a socialist newspaper dedicated to recording the daily struggles of the working class and fighting for its just causes. We welcome your articles and ideas (include name, address, and phone number). Any editing will be done in consultation with the author. Names will be omitted on request.

Co-ordinator Alan Story
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Address all correspondence to:
EAST COAST WORKER
BOX 3355, HALIFAX SOUTH
HALIFAX, N. S.



Towards a labour press

This is the first issue of the East Coast Worker, a newspaper which our organization, the East Coast Socialist Movement, believes will develop over time into the militant opposition voice of the working class of Nova Scotia. This paper will express its daily struggles, fight for its just causes, analyse its victories and defeats and plan for a new society founded on workers' control of their factories and other places of work, grassroots political democracy and an end to exploitation of man by man. Two slogans taken from the old Cape Breton newspaper, the Maritime Labor Herald, perhaps best express its purpose: "Labor's Defender — Fearless and True" and "A Workers' Paper to counter the lies of the bosses' press."

WHY A WORKERS' PAPER?

Why is a labor paper needed again today? For many of the reasons that working people needed J. B. McLachlan's Maritime Labor Herald and M. A. Mackenzie's Steelworker & Miner. To an even greater extent than in the 1920's and 30's, mass communications are controlled by a small clique. This gang and their newspapers such as the Chronicle-Herald and the Cape Breton Post have two purposes: to make profits and to keep society moving in a direction that ensures that they and their corporate friends remain at the top of the heap. They make trivial issues, like J. P. MacKeen's funeral and Trudeau's wedding, important. They make serious issues, like the young and skilled being forced from their homes to find work in Upper Canada and hundreds of men being forced out of work on the Halifax waterfront, trivial. They editorialize for even harsher controls on working people — Thatcher's labor courts — and against basic rights of working people — not allowing Canso fishermen to have their own union. They isolate people from each other and try to persuade us that we do not really know what our own lives are like. If working people don't understand how this oppressive political and economic system works and how to change it, they certainly aren't to blame. As columnist Jay Fox once wrote, "working people are doped, chloroformed, befuddled and made an ass of by the newspapers and some of them don't suspect it in the least because they have been fed on the drug since infancy."

A WORKERS' PAPER BEGINS THE FIGHT

It is the job of a labor paper to end this addiction. Hence, our modest beginning. This paper has been established, in the first place, to allow the man and woman on the street, on the shopfloor, in the mines, on the boats and in the offices, to express their ideas and debate how to make changes which will benefit working people. We stress the words "benefit working people" because this paper was not established to publish weak-kneed apologies for economic brutality or the ravings of narrow-minded phonies. Moreover, we believe that news should be written by those who experience it. It is this participation and collective effort which will be of prime importance in the success of the paper. Secondly, this paper should act as "the glue" to bring together isolated struggles and isolated militant workers through debate, through criticism and face-to-face communication. This communication and trading of views and information can be one beginning in the building of a unified, progressive and honestly active working class movement in this region. Not, of course, that a newspaper is enough. Rather, as political organizing moves forward, victories are won and debate becomes sharper, a workers' paper can perform the much-needed tasks of political education and strategical direction.

What of the content? As it is a labour paper, the news coverage will be concerned with those issues which affect working men and women — conditions on the shop floor, strikes and settlements, high prices, layoffs, unemployment, trade union democracy, political freedom and how to build a better future. In this reporting, the East Coast Worker must be both blunt and honest. If a union or its leadership — whether it is progressive or reactionary in its politics — wins a victory or sells out the rank-and-file, the facts must be brought forward. A hard-won victory deserves praise; a crafty sell-out deserves scorn and a solution for the next time. Similarly, those who write for the paper must not build up readers with false optimism in reporting events or sink them into deepest despair. Misleaders and their opinions are always found out in the end.

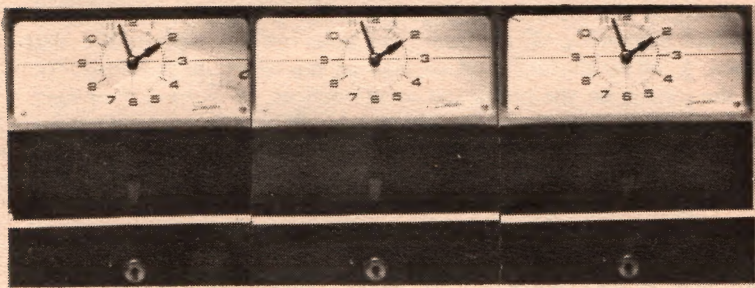
But the East Coast Worker has another purpose besides basic news coverage. That purpose is countering and exposing the camouflage of capitalist society which gushed forth daily from the politicians, the businessmen, the labor fakers and the press. They use such choice phrases to rationalize present conditions and justify their own actions. "We must bring peace and stability to the labour movement" means "crush the militants and no tampering with the profits and increased productivity we steal." "Work through proper, established channels" means "come, join us, in our bureaucratic swamps so that we can deal with you on our terms." Imagine the Chronicle-Herald reporting, as it did on June 7, that "R. B. Cameron put the steel plant back on its feet" when we all know that only through the sweat and determination of Sydney steelworkers was the old Dosco plant saved and restored. Or Joe Howard of Halterm proclaiming about the glorious developments in containerization on the Halifax waterfront while hundreds of men are thrown out of work to face a future of welfare payment. Such hypocrisy and deceit must be both exposed and opposed. Moreover, an alternate view of reality, socialist ideas, must be presented to explain how this society operates and for whose benefit. These ideas will also help to plan the basis for a new society, a society to be created through great struggle and determination. It will not be an easy fight.

BUILDING THE WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT

The working class movement will face a number of critical questions in coming years. How to develop an economic and political strategy, based on the particulars of our Maritime region, to allow us to move forward, to tackle crucial social issues and work-out solutions? How to build a political vehicle to give expression to this movement and what will be its relationship with the New Democratic Party? How to establish trade union democracy and organize militant rank-and-file committees? How to spread socialist ideas and develop the necessary understanding on questions such as Maritimes underdevelopment and nationalism? These are only a beginning list of the questions to be faced by the East Coast Worker.

One question remains. Who and what is the East Coast Socialist Movement? We are a revolutionary socialist movement established in Halifax in the fall of 1970. We believe that only through disciplined, militant and long-term action by working people and socialist intellectuals can fundamental changes be made in Canada and a socialist society built from the ashes of the old. The ECSM is not affiliated with any other political party or movement. However, we do not consider ourselves to be the only progressive socialist grouping in the region nor do we claim sole leadership of the socialist movement. Leadership can only be proven through time and concrete struggle. To date, we have been actively involved with the Canso fishermen in their fight for the union of their own choice, and we have assisted the Halifax City Workers in their strike this past spring. Initial attempts have been made to bring left-wing trade unionists together in a common front over crucial issues. We have also started to analyse some of the fundamental issues facing progressives in this area such as repressive labour legislation, underdevelopment and the "development policies" of IEL and others, containerization, labour history and parliamentary politics.

This is the first issue of the East Coast Worker. In coming months we invite workers and progressives to come forward with their articles, their ideas and their criticisms — of this paper, of its articles and of the ECSM. We repeat — it is a modest beginning. Patience, participation, debate and a correct theoretical understanding can build the East Coast Worker into the oppositional, pro-working class press the people of the Maritimes deserve.



TRENTON STRIKE ENTERS FOURTH WEEK

The strike of Local 1231 steelworkers against the Trenton Car Works is entering its fourth week and the company still hasn't come up with an offer the men can accept. Trenton's general manager J. Grant Mitchell says that the union demands are "double what the company can afford to pay." The men know that workers at the company's main competition, National Steel Car in Hamilton, Ontario, make between 62 cents and \$1.00 more per hour. The men also know that the Hawker Siddeley fat cats back in England haven't been eating too much hamburger recently. After reducing their wage demands four times, the men voted 973 to 159 for strike action on June 10. They went out the very next day when the day shift failed to show up. It's the first legal strike in 28 years. Best of luck, boys!

HOTEL NOVA SCOTIAN WORKERS TAKE STRIKE VOTE

Employees of the Hotel Nova Scotian will take a strike vote Monday (July 5) on whether to accept the report of Judge Nathan Green and the board of enquiry over wages and working conditions. If the more than 200 voters say "yes" to strike, they would be eligible to hit the bricks on Tuesday. Gerald Jollymore, business agent of Local 662, Hotel, Restaurant Employees and Bartenders International Union said Wednesday however, that if a strike is voted on, "we'll call it when we decide." Some employees at the federally-owned Nova Scotian start at \$1.28 per hour while the majority make less than \$1.40. The top chef only makes \$1.94. The present dispute began in September 1970 when management refused to offer the federal minimum wage of \$1.65 as a bargaining base. It's the same story as last fall's dockyard strike. All other CN hotel employees across the country, except those in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, make the minimum. As Jollymore said "we're simply country cousins." The Nova Scotian, most admit, is a pretty crummy place to work and most overtime work is given to part-time employees who aren't paid time and a half. The last strike at the hotel was in 1950 when employees went back to work for 4 cents. The Chronicle-Herald is already complaining about the effects of a strike, if it comes this time. "A strike at the city's major hotel, in the middle of the tourist season, would be harmful to the city as a whole, perhaps the province," the Chronicle said June 30. Such a reactionary paper would never think to ask whether Hotel Nova Scotian employees making \$1.40 per hour would be able to get a decent vacation themselves.

IS CUPE KEEPING HOME FIRES BURNING?

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), always one of the most active organizing unions, is stepping up its campaign to take over bargaining rights of Department of Highways employees from Allan Stockall's Operators, Journeymen and Laborers Union. CUPE spokesmen claim that 440 of the estimated 1200 workers have already signed cards. CUPE is also fairly active at Dalhousie among members of the International Union of Operating Engineers who are clearly dissatisfied with the lack of any say in the affairs of the international union, and more particularly, with the lack of union benefits at the local level. But CUPE organizers should also be concerned about present members. The city employee's local in Sydney hasn't had a meeting for many months. It's a pretty undemocratic outfit with the highest-paid employees and supervisors (mostly men) having a monopoly over union positions. And then there's the intolerable situation of Halifax city workers in CUPE 108 and 449. Their strike against the city ended April 16 with the "promise" of speedy recommendations from both union leadership and Len Pace's office. It's now 2½ months later and such recommendations still seem a long way off. And with well-known anti-labor Judge Nathan Green calling the shots, the CUPE members aren't likely to get much of a settlement. Green hosed Canso fishermen last summer and didn't exactly come through for Hotel Nova Scotian employees.

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE AT RHAND?

Gerry Regan has been ranting and raving in the legislature and around the province on how concerned he is about "lost production." And, of course, workers are always to blame and are liable to fines of up to \$1,000 per day and unions of \$10,000 per day for every day of lost production. Well, Gerry, how about what's happening at Rhand Electronics in Glace Bay? Rhand shut down last December 9 after operating for less than a year. It re-opened at the end of February and shut down again April 11. According to our calculations, Rhand owes the provincial treasury close to 1.1 million dollars. Which, as we all know, would come from the coffers of DEVCO if they ever had to pay such a fine. The plant supposedly has an employment potential of 250 but, in peak periods, only employed 42 workers. Again, more lost production. Laid-off workers have already staged a demonstration to protest the shutdowns and to ask for government assistance. At last report, nothing substantial had materialized.

How one class gets rich off us

Adapted from Leo Huberman's
"Introduction to Socialism"

No matter whether you're rich or poor, strong or weak, white, black, yellow, or brown, people everywhere must produce and distribute the things they need in order to live.

The system of production and distribution in Canada is called capitalism. Many other countries of the world have the same system.

In order to produce and distribute bread, clothes, houses, cars, and the many other things we consume, we need to have two essentials:

1. Land, mines, raw materials, machines — what are called the "means of production".
2. Labour — workers who use their strength and skill on the means of production to turn out the required goods.

In Canada, as in the U.S. and other capitalist countries, the means of production are not public property. The land, raw materials, factories, machines are owned by individuals — by capitalists. And this is important. Because whether you own or do not own the means of production determines your position in society. If you belong to the small group of owners of the means of production — the capitalist class — you can live without working. If you belong to the large group that does not own the means of production — the working class — you can't live unless you work.

One class lives by owning; the other class lives by working. The capitalist class gets its income by employing other people to work for it; the working class gets its income in the form of wages for the work it does.

Since labour is essential to the production of all the goods we need in order to live, you would suppose that those who do the labour — the working class — would be well rewarded. But they aren't. In capitalist society, it isn't those who work the most who get the largest incomes, it is those who own the most.

Since the worker does not own the means of production, he can only make his living in one way — by hiring himself out for wages to those who do. He goes to market with a commodity for sale — his capacity to work, his labour power. That's what the employer pays him wages for. The worker sells his commodity, labour power, to the boss in return for wages.

When a worker hires himself out to an employer, he doesn't sell him what he produces; the worker sells his ability to produce.

The employer does not pay the worker for the product of eight hours work; the employer pays him to work eight hours.

The worker sells his labour power for the length of the whole working day — say eight hours. Now suppose that the time necessary to produce the value or worth of the worker's wages is four hours. He doesn't stop working then and go home. Oh, no. He has been hired to work eight hours. So he continues to work the other four hours. In these four hours, he is working not for himself, but for his employer. Part of his labour is paid labour; part is unpaid labour.

There must be a difference between what the worker is paid and the value he produces, or else the employer wouldn't hire him. The difference between what the worker receives in wages and the value of the commodity he produces is called surplus value.

Surplus value is the profit that goes to the employer. He buys labour power at one price and sells the product of labour at a higher price. The difference — surplus value — he keeps for himself.

It is not in the process of exchange of commodities but rather in the process of production that profit is made. The profits that go to the capitalist class arise out of production.

The workers by transforming raw materials into the finished article have brought new wealth into existence, have created a new value. The difference between what the worker is paid in

wages and the amount of value he has added to the raw materials is what the employer keeps.

How much wages will the worker get? What is it that determines the rate of his wages?

In a capitalist society, man does not produce things which he wants to satisfy his own needs, he produces things to sell to others. Where formerly people produced goods for their own use, today they produce commodities for the market.

The capitalist system is concerned with the production and exchange of commodities. This is the key to the amount of wages a worker will receive. What the worker has to sell is a commodity.

The value of his labour power like that of any other commodity is determined by the amount of socially necessary labour time required to produce it. But since the worker's labour power is part of himself, the value of his labour is equal to the food, clothing, and shelter necessary for him to live (and since the supply of labour must continue, to raise a family).

In other words, if the owner of a factory, mill or mine wants forty hours of labour done, he must pay the man who is to do the work enough to live on and to bring up children capable of taking his place when he gets too old to work or dies.

Workers will get then, in return for their labour power, subsistence wages, with enough more (in some countries) to enable them to buy a radio, or an electric refrigerator, or a ticket to the movies occasionally.

Does this economic law that worker's wages will tend to be merely subsistence then mean that political and trade union action by workers is useless? No, it definitely does not. On the contrary workers through their unions have been able in some countries including Canada to raise wages above the minimum subsistence level. And the important point to remember is that this is the only way open to workers to keep that economic law from operating all the time. The only way that is except by building a socialist society.

In a capitalist society it is profit that makes the wheels go round. The smart businessman is the one who pays as little as possible for what he buys and receives as much as possible for what he sells. The first step on the road to high profits is to reduce expenses. One of the expenses of production is wages to labour. The employer must therefore pay as low wages as possible to the worker. He must also try to get as much work out of his labourers as possible. For the businessman to do otherwise would mean being forced out of business by his competitors.

The interests of the owners of the means of production and of the men who work for them are opposed. For the capitalists, property takes first place, humanity second place; for the workers humanity — the livelihood of the vast majority — takes first place, property second place. That is why in capitalist society, there is always conflict between the two classes.

Both sides in the class war act the way they do because they must. The capitalist must try to make profits to remain a capitalist. The worker must try to get decent wages to remain alive. Each can succeed only at the expense of the other.

All the talk about "harmony" between capital and labour is so much nonsense. In capitalist society there can be no such harmony because what is good for one class is bad for the other, and vice versa.

The relationship, then that must exist between the owners of the means of production and the workers in a capitalist society is the relationship of a knife to a throat.

Only a workers struggle for a society owned and controlled by workers, a socialist society, can overcome such a relationship.